

**The Rwanda crisis**  
**Role of the international Community**

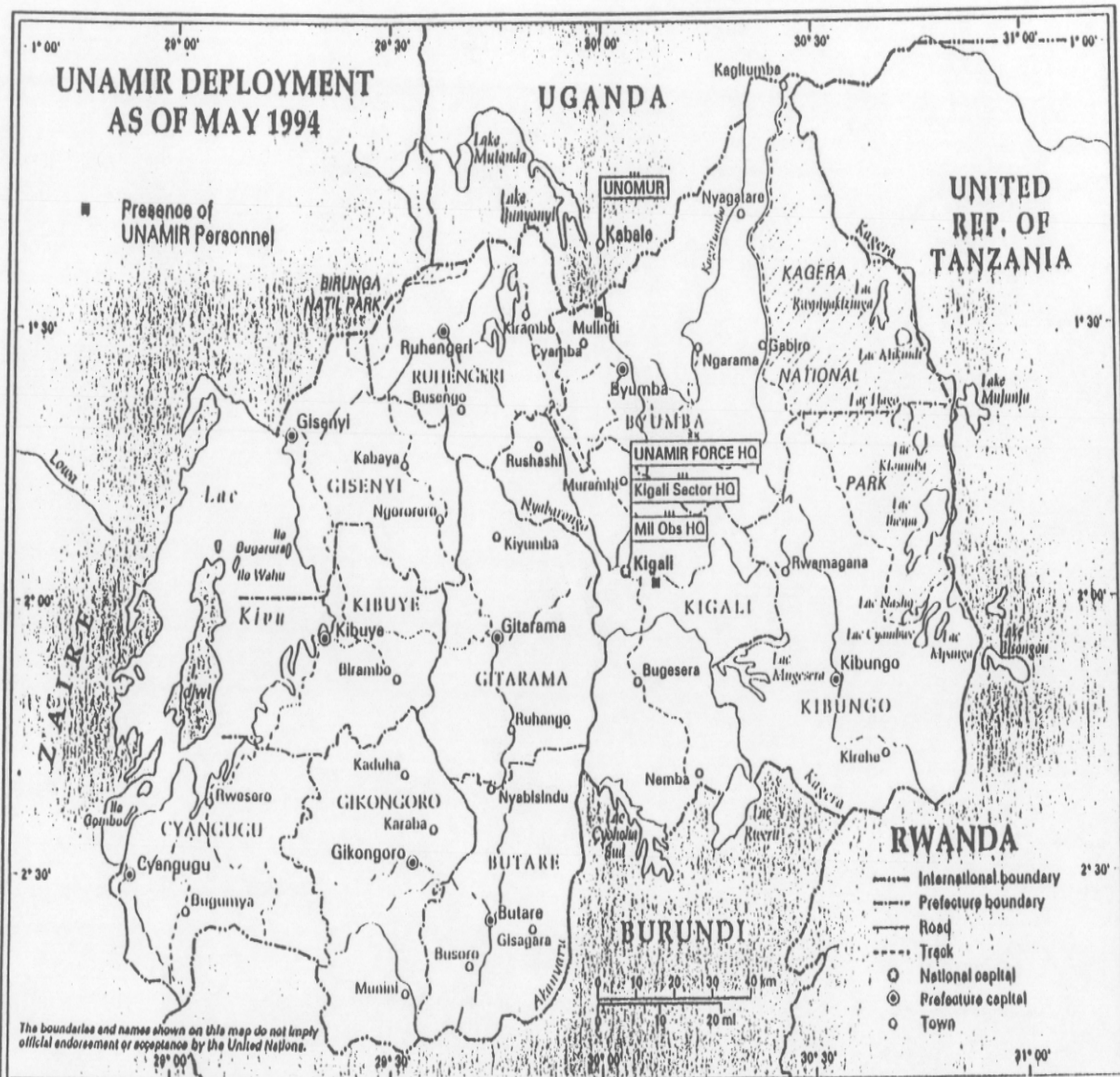
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**Webster Geneva, February 1995**

<b><u>INTRODUCTION</u></b> .....	4
<b><u>I    HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</u></b> .....	5
A) THE ETHNIC GROUPS.....	5
B) COLONIALISM .....	6
<b><u>II    RECENT EVENTS</u></b> .....	7
A) THE MASSACRE OF CIVILIANS .....	7
B) THE WAR .....	9
C) ROLE OF UNAMIR.....	9
<b><u>III    ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY</u></b> .....	11
A) EARLY WARNING .....	11
B) THE OPÉRATION TURQUOISE .....	12
C) RESOLUTION 929 .....	13
<b><u>CONCLUSION</u></b> .....	14
<b><u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u></b> .....	16



MAP NO. 3807.1 Rev. 2 UNITED NATIONS  
MAY 1994

## **Introduction**

While the genocidal aspect of Rwanda sets it apart from other crises in recent memory, the effective breakdown of government and society does not. In Africa - and elsewhere - there is an increasing number of situations where national structures have ceased to exist and warlords and anarchy prevail, or where regimes are so corrupt and repressive that they are totally unacceptable to both their people and to the international community. In such instances, the duty of the international community becomes overwhelming. Cold war realpolitik often blinded us to that duty as various alliances were prepared to legitimise and defend their client regime regardless of democratic or human rights shortcomings. In our post-'89 era, we are not so inclined to rationalise the indefensible.

Outsiders actively and callously armed Rwandans, and outsiders over the years allied with and encouraged a particular elite in hopes that this elite would further their political or business objectives. Such attitude is not new and certainly not excusable. However just as foreign governments can certainly worsen things, so can the international community actively intervene to mitigate disasters.

In this exercise, we will attempt to follow the chronological development of the meaningful events which led to a very controversial intervention: the Operation Turquoise. This paper will therefore cover immediate History with the advantages and the inconveniences that such an approach carries. Advantages because the recent events which took place in Rwanda are numerous and still fresh in our memory. If we try to analyse and understand them now, maybe, will we be able to foresee what the future holds. Inconveniences because we haven't had the time necessary to distinguish what is essential from what's not and therefore drawing erroneous conclusions.

## **I Historical Background**

### **a) The Ethnic Groups**

The Banyarwanda are East Africa's largest tribe. They are a Bantu people who live in Rwanda, Eastern Zaire, western Tanzania and south-western Uganda. They speak Kinyarwanda in Rwanda and Kirundi in Burundi (similar languages) and are close relatives of the Banyakole and Bakiga in Uganda, the Barundi in Burundi and other neighbouring groups.

Rwanda is an old African kingdom. In the 1800s, it was one of the strongest societies in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa, in which people were united by the semi-divine rule of their king. The term "Banyarwanda" embraced four ethnies:

- i) The Ganwa, politicians and rulers of royal blood. Today seen as a Tutsi sub-group.
- ii) The Tutsi, mainly cattle keepers.
- iii) The Hutu, mainly cultivators.
- iv) The Twa, potters, hunters. The pygmies in that region are mostly Twas.

The Tutsi were of a higher status: there were more Tutsi chiefs, more Tutsi receiving tribute from the Hutu than the other way around. According to anthropologist Rene Lemarchand, this was accepted as a natural order and "despite their great differences in status (...) Hutu and Tutsi conducted friendly social intercourse<sup>1</sup>. This relationship was based on two contracts: the *Ubugabire* and the *Ubugererwa*<sup>2</sup>.

The Tutsi maintained their dominance through this feudal system, mainly based on cattle. Hutu clients gave their labour or part of their crop to the Tutsi patron. In return, they received cows and protection.

There were several categories of Tutsi, also linked by clientelism, whose status depended on how closely they were related to the King. In general, while clientelism was an oppressive burden on the Hutu, and also weighted heavily on poor Tutsi, it was an advantageous means of social advancement for many Tutsi. In 1954, King Mutara Rudahigwa banned the continuation of these traditional client / patron ties. Soon, social mobility and marriage between different ethnic groups blurred the Tutsi / Hutu distinction. In fact, a rich Hutu who had become a chief, or simply wealthy, could become a Tutsi through Kwihutura<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Rene Lemarchand, "Rwanda and Burundi". Pall Mall Press. London, 1970.

<sup>2</sup> The *Ubugabire* entailed a man giving another a cow and in return, receiving gifts, such as pots of beer. The *Ubugererwa* had the client (some historians call them serfs), in exchange of a plot of land, toiling for the land owner. This was often handed down from father to son.

<sup>3</sup> Shedding Hutuness

Reversibly, over one or two generations, a Tutsi family could lose its cows, turn to cultivation, marry into Hutu families, and eventually become Hutu.

## **b) Colonialism**

Burton and Speke were the first explorers to visit the region in 1858, followed by missionaries. In 1896, the Ruanda-Urundi kingdom is integrated to the German colonial protectorate. Many of the German colonists were aristocrats laden with their racial and class prejudices. They identified with the Tutsi, who were often very tall and who struck them as refined and intelligent. They noted the shorter and stockier Hutu and the even shorter Twa, and decided that the three were distinct ethnic groups. The Hamitic theory was born.

In accordance with this theory it is held that the Tutsi and Ganwa were noblemen, children of the biblical figure Ham, who had migrated from Christian Ethiopia several hundred years earlier, Bantu Africa being considered as too backward to generate the organised Kingdom of Ruanda-Urundi. The Hamites had conquered the Hutu, said to be Bantu, and the Twa, said to be the original pygmoid inhabitants, and subjected them to feudalism. Anthropologists now reject this theory, saying that there is no linguistic proof, and that height depended mostly on diet. But, taught in every mission school and imbibed by the population which began to see itself in terms of "serfs" and "masters", it became a self fulfilling prophecy.

After the first World War, Ruanda-Urundi was put under a League of Nations mandate and given to the Belgians to administer. The Belgians deepened ethnic division, producing much of the bitterness that has followed to this day, by favouring the Tutsi over the Hutu. Where Hutu chiefs were ruling, the Belgians installed a Tutsi. They sharpened class differences by reclassifying all Banyarwandese with less than ten cows as Hutu and those with more as Tutsi. Until the late 1940s, they educated only Tutsi. In the 1950s, European powers became preoccupied with the threat of a "Red Belt" of radical independent states across Africa, from Nkrumah's Ghana to Karume's Zanzibar. Suspecting some nationalist Tutsi of leftist tendencies, Belgium concluded that the way to forestall communism in Rwanda-Urundi was to "liberate Hutu peasantry from Tutsi feudalistic oppression"<sup>4</sup>. Thus, in 1959, as independence loomed, Belgium switched support to the Hutu.

In July 1959, reform-minded King Mutara died mysteriously in Bujumbura. In August, Rwanda's first political party, the "Union Nationale Rwandaise" (UNAR) was created. Though it included some Hutu, it was militantly pro-monarchy, pro-Tutsi and anti-Belgian. It was countered in October by the formation of the "Parti de l'Emancipation Hutu" (PARMEHUTU). On November 1, UNAR activists attacked a Hutu subchief who was a key figure in PARMEHUTU. In revenge, some Hutu attacked a Tutsi chief who belonged to UNAR. Rwanda's communal violence had begun. In the months that followed, at least 350 Tutsi chiefs and sub-chiefs were killed, arrested or made to resign. The Hutu continued the harassment, particularly the burning of Tutsi huts. By April 1960, about 22,000 Tutsi were internally displaced. In June and July 1960, Rwanda's first local elections were held amid more violence.

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<sup>4</sup> René Lemarchand, op.cit.

PARMEHUTU scored an overwhelming victory. On January 28, 1961, Rwanda's burgomasters and officials met at Gitarama. With the blessing of the Belgians, but in defiance of the UN (which had laid out a slower schedule towards independence), PARMEHUTU abolished the monarchy and declared Rwanda a Republic. Independence brought no let up in attacks on the Tutsi. 120 000 were to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. That same year, UNAR militants among the refugees organised themselves into guerrilla bands. Calling themselves *Iyenzi*<sup>5</sup>, they lead attacks in Rwanda from Uganda, Burundi, Zaire and the then Tanganyika<sup>6</sup>. Their targets were Hutu officials in order to cause Hutu to lash out at the Tutsi. But these attacks were sanctioned by violent revenge from Hutu on local Tutsi population. Between March 1961 and July 1966, the Inyenzi launched ten major attacks. Eventually they fell back into exile, defeated, finally accepting that their attacks only brought disaster on the Tutsi in Rwanda and that their leader's funds for globetrotting to gain political support were exhausted.

## **II Recent events**

### **a) The massacre of civilians**

The death of president Juvénal Habyarimana of Rwanda, in what is still considered as a suspicious plane crash, on 6 April 1994, was the trigger moment for Hutu extremists from the late president's entourage, to launch a campaign of genocide against the Tutsi. The extremists had also killed Hutu who had shown willingness in co-operating with the Tutsi in forming a more democratic government in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Arusha Accords<sup>7</sup>. It is estimated that from April to July 1994, between 500,000 to one million men, women and children were massacred. From earlier massacres in Rwanda, - October 1990, January-February 1991, March 1992, December 1992-February 1993 - this latest slaughter differs largely in scale.

The massacres seem to have been planned months in advance. The presidential guard and other elements of the Rwandan army taught members of the political party militias, particularly the *Interahamwe*<sup>8</sup> and the *Impuzamugambi*<sup>9</sup>, how to kill more efficiently. The *Interahamwe* were part of the *Mouvement Republicain National pour le Développement et la Démocratie* (MRND), the party of the late president. The *Impuzamugambi* are attached to the *Coalition pour la Défense de la République* (CDR), an extremist Hutu party in alliance with the MNRD. Created in 1992, these militia received intensified military training in late 1993 and early 1994, as groups of 300 men at a time were sent for three weeks to a military camp in the north-eastern region of Mutura.

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<sup>5</sup> Cockroaches.

<sup>6</sup> Tanzania.

<sup>7</sup> Accords signed in Arusha, Tanzania on 4 August 1993.

<sup>8</sup> "Those who attack together".

<sup>9</sup> "Those with a single purpose

In their attacks on civilians, the militia were often accompanied by a small number of soldiers or national policemen. Overall, however, the militia are estimated to have killed far more people than have the official members of the armed forces.

According to the bishop of the important Catholic Diocese of Nyundo, the former Rwandan authorities distributed firearms to militia members as early as 1992, and gave out many more in late 1993 and early 1994. A private radio station owned by members of Habyarimana's inner circle, the *Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines*, began last autumn, a campaign of hate-filled propaganda against the Tutsi, and members of the opposition to the Habyarimana regime, both Tutsi and Hutu. At the end of 1993, the broadcasts became more virulent and began targeting individuals who were named as "enemies" or "traitors" who "deserved to die"<sup>10</sup>. Throughout the weeks of slaughter, the radio station incited listeners to genocide, encouraging them to "fill the half-empty graves"<sup>11</sup>.

Within an hour of the plane crash, the Presidential Guard had set up roadblocks around the capital of Kigali and had begun liquidating key members of the opposition. Among early victims were Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and President of the Supreme Court, Joseph Kavaruganda. The Presidential Guard was joined by the party militias and, within a week, these forces had killed an estimated 20,000 people in Kigali and its immediate environs.

The international community responded by evacuating foreign nationals, the first step in its withdrawal from the crisis. Beginning April 15, when most foreigners had departed, the leaders of the genocide extended its scope outside the capital to the East and the Southwest. Many people were killed in their homes, but others were slain in hospitals and churches, places usually recognised as sanctuaries. Shortly after the crash and the beginning of the massacres, a group of politicians close to Habyarimana proclaimed

themselves the new government. Backed by extremist military, the self-proclaimed regime won tacit recognition from Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Rwanda. The ministers of the new government claimed to represent a number of political parties and thus to continue the mandate of the previous coalition government, but in fact all emerged from the same position whatever their party labels. On April 19, the President of the New Government, Theodore Sindikubwabo, decided to remove the prefect of Butare, Jean-Baptiste Habyimana, a Tutsi and a member of the political opposition, and to replace him with a hard-line military man from the north of Rwanda. Butare, where Hutu and Tutsi had lived closely together, was generally hostile to Habyarimana and his anti-Tutsi ideology. As the site of the original campus of the National University, several research institutes, and the new National Museum, it was the intellectual capital of Rwanda. That evening, the Rwandan President gave a speech on national radio calling for the killing of "accomplices" in Butare. Units of the Presidential Guard flew into Butare airport. The massacres began almost immediately.

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<sup>10</sup> The Washington Post, 17 April 1994.

<sup>11</sup> The Herald Tribune, 21 April 1994.

## **b) The War**

Shortly after the massacres of civilians had begun, the war between the Rwandan army and the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) resumed, ending a cease-fire in effect since August 1993. Rwanda was the theatre of an odd play where two different violence - the slaughter of the defenceless by government party militias or the President's Guard, and the battle between two armies - took place simultaneously, sometimes in the same area, as in Kigali, but often in widely separated regions. The South and West, where some of the worst massacres occurred, were remote from actual war zones.

The RPF is composed largely of Tutsi who fled a 1953-63 revolution that ended their aristocratic control over Rwanda and installed a Hutu dominated regime. After thirty years in exile, a force composed from among these refugees and their children invaded Rwanda in October 1990, first seeking the right to return home and later hoping to overturn the Habyarimana Government. In addition to resisting the RPF military, Habyarimana immediately launched a campaign against the Tutsi within the country, accusing them of being "accomplices" of the RPF.

The civil war between the Government and the RPF was ended by a peace agreement signed in Arusha, Tanzania, on 4 August 1993 (the Arusha Accords), which provided for a transitional government composed of Habyarimana's MRND, the internal opposition parties and the RPF. The United Nations provided a peacekeeping force, UNAMIR<sup>12</sup>, to monitor the execution of the agreement and facilitate the integration of the two armies. Under the terms of the agreement, the RPF was permitted to station a battalion in Kigali under UN protection. Because of a series of delays, most of them caused by Habyarimana and his supporters, the transitional government had not yet been installed at the time of the plane crash. When the civilian massacre began, the UNAMIR troops failed to respond. The RPF decided to resume the war, both to rescue its troops in Kigali, who clearly could not expect any effective protection from the UN, and to try to stop the massacres.

## **c) Role of UNAMIR**

Under the terms of the Arusha Accords, the United Nations was asked to provide a peacekeeping force to monitor the agreement. This force, the United Nations Assistance Mission In Rwanda (UNAMIR), which just before the crisis numbered 2,500 troops, was to monitor the cease-fire, contribute to the security of the city of Kigali and engage in other activities associated with the establishment of a transitional government in which members of Habyarimana's government would share power with members of internal opposition and representatives of the RPF.

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<sup>12</sup> United Nations Assistance Mission In Rwanda, established by Security Council's Resolution 872 of 5 October 1993.



In February 1994, the assassination of two leading political figures was followed by a week of killings and other violence in Kigali. Interpreting its mandate narrowly, UNAMIR made no effective response to the violence, although it certainly heightened insecurity in the capital. As tensions grew throughout February and March, UN personnel and the diplomatic community in general became well aware of extremely worrying developments indicating that hard-liners in the government intended to overturn the Arusha Accords. There is little doubt that the international community in Rwanda was at many instances warned by responsible local persons, including human rights activists and political leaders, that preparations were underway for a campaign to wipe out those who opposed Habyarimana's regime<sup>13</sup>. It knew of the hate-filled radio broadcasts, the distribution of arms<sup>14</sup> and the training of the militia. Whether unable to imagine the scale of the horror which was to take place or simply irresponsible, it took no effective action to prevent the disaster.

After the plane crash, UNAMIR failed again to act decisively. Apparently both the terms of the mandate and the lack of appropriate equipment for the troops hampered an effective response. When Prime Minister Aghate Uwilingiyimana fled for her life to a UN compound, UNAMIR dispatched ten soldiers, part of the Belgian contingent, to rescue her. They encountered a hostile and armed crowd and three UN soldiers were seriously injured. The others requested instructions from headquarters and were told to put down their arms and attempt to negotiate with the crowd<sup>15</sup>. They were slaughtered. The Belgian government then withdrew its troops. Subsequently Bangladeshi troops also left, some of them in panic before orders were given for their withdrawal.

On April 21, the Security Council met to decide the fate of the UNAMIR force. Rather than admitting that genocide was taking place, as was clearly apparent by that date, or at least leave space for reasonable doubt and accept the responsibility of preventing it, the Security Council voted to withdraw the majority of the remaining troops and to leave behind a skeleton force of 270 soldiers. Proponents of the reduction of UNAMIR argued the necessity of removing the troops from a threatening situation which they were ill-equipped to handle. But with the exception of the ten Belgian soldiers killed while attempting to defend the Prime Minister, surely one of the most important targets of the extremists, and one who was later killed in a mortar attack in Kigali, no additional UN soldier had been killed in the weeks of subsequent violence. There had never been evidence that UN troops had been targeted by either of the hostile parties after the first day of the massacres<sup>16</sup>.

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13 Speaking on Radio -France Internationale, quoted in BBC On March 15 1994, Jacques-Roger BoohBooh said: "The peace process is at a standstill. The spectre of a new war is persisting (...)", Summary of World Broadcasts, AL/ 1948 A/3.

14 The major arms supplies to the Rwandese government have been well documented as explained in the Human Rights Watch Arms Project: "Arming Rwanda: The arms trade and Human Rights abuses in the Rwandan War" New York, January 1994. Ironically, it is suspected that a French-supplied ground-to-air missile brought down the Presidential plane on April 6. The French air crew died in the crash.

15 The Herald Tribune, 19 April 1994.

16 US Navy Captain, Gordon Peterson, spokesman for US European Command headquarters in Stuttgart told Reuters on April 9: "We have had no reports of specific threats against (UNAMIR troops)". That same day, French armed forces chief of staff, Admiral Jacques Laxande, said that "although UNAMIR contingency was not under direct threat, the situation could change (...)" Reuters April 9.

It soon came to light that the Security Council had been receiving inaccurate reports on the situation in the first weeks of violence, particularly those based on information from the Secretary General's Special Representative Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh. Characterised by *The Washington Post* as "blurred, sanitised summaries (...) depicting mutual and chaotic killings"<sup>17</sup>, these reports failed to convey the systematic and organised nature of the genocide which had already been established by accounts in the press.

In the face of the mounting disaster, and particularly following widely publicised accounts of the massive outflow of refugees on April 29, delegates from the Czech Republic, New Zealand, Spain and Argentina played the leading role in shaming other member nations into deciding that more troops should be sent back to Rwanda with an expanded mandate. On May 16, 1994, the Security Council authorised a force of 5,500 troops with a Chapter VII mandate - permitting them to use force if necessary to carry out their mission - to protect displaced persons, refugees and civilians at risk<sup>18</sup>. This force was UNAMIR II.

### **III Role of the International Community**

#### **a) Early Warning**

Certainly the specifics of the Rwandan crisis were unique and more horrific than might have been anticipated. However there is clear proof that the international community was fully aware of the incipient crisis in Rwanda through reports of NGOs<sup>19</sup> and UN organisations<sup>20</sup>. What is not clear, and may never be known, is the extent to which individual countries had their own intelligence on what was happening. However, it would be particularly surprising if France or Belgium did not have a complete

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<sup>17</sup>The Washington Post, 8 May 1994.

<sup>18</sup> Security Council Resolution 918, 16 May 1994.

<sup>19</sup> Amnesty International report "Rwanda, persecution of Tutsi minority and repression of government critics 1990-1992" (Afr 47/02/92) talked of more than 1,000 extrajudicial executions, and of over 8,000 political prisoners following the October 1990 invasion by the RPF.

Human Rights Watch: "Rwanda, Talking Peace and Waging War: human rights since the October 1990 invasion", of 27 February 1992, and "Beyond the Rhetoric: continuing human rights abuses in Rwanda", 29 June 1993, or "Arming Rwanda: the arms trade and human rights abuses in the Rwandan War", 19 January 1994.

ICHRDD, UIDH, FIDH, and HRW combined to produce the March 1993 "Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights Violations in Rwanda since 1 October 1990". The Commission, inter alia, concluded that the government had participated in or failed to the killing of over 2,000 individuals.

<sup>20</sup> Of particular note was the report of the special Rapporteur Waly Bacré Ndiaye on extrajudicial, arbitrary executions. In view of the seriousness of events in Rwanda, he submitted a lengthily 36 page addendum to his main report to the UNHCR, in which he reported on his mission to Rwanda from 8 to 17 April 1993. Not only were his observations and recommendations detailed, but also did he publish this report on 11 August 1993, eight month prior to the fatal plane crash. In addition his report was formally tabled during the 50th session of the Commission on Human Rights in February 1994.

awareness of what was occurring within the Rwandan military and political circles. The perception that coloured UN intelligence gathering and its interpretation was one of a messy civil war. The human rights violations by the former government were only seen as quantifiably different from those of the RPF. More insidious and undeniably racist was the perception that such human rights violations were certainly horrendous, but acceptable in the African context. The former Rwandan Government played on that perception to the extent that the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Jacques-Roger Booh-Boob, failing to criticise the atrocities committed by the former Government's armed forces, reported events following April 6 as simply a resurgent civil war and recommended the UN halt the advance of the RPF. His attitude and general incompetence resulted in his being quietly exiled to Nairobi until his term ended. This widespread perception by most developed countries would explain the amazing lethargy of the world community to react during the first week and for many during the second week of the crisis. Further, accepting that genocide was occurring would have imposed moral obligations to intervene and certainly legal obligations on the 101 states that have ratified the Genocide Convention.

## **b) The Opération Turquoise**

The necessary measures taken by the Security Council were the establishment of a peacekeeping operation under the name United Nations Assistance Mission In Rwanda (UNAMIR) in resolution 872 of 5 October 1993. UNAMIR's mandate included the monitoring of security in the capital Kigali and around the city. In the face of the massacres that took place after the April 6 events, this mandate was expanded under resolution 918 of 16 May 1994 to include, *inter alia*, "the security and protection of displaced persons, refugees and civilians at risk in Rwanda, including, through the establishment and maintenance, where feasible, of secure humanitarian areas"<sup>21</sup>. The force level was expanded from 503 to 5,500 troops.

By June it was obvious that UNAMIR would never be 5,500 men strong. Reports were mentioning 500,000 dead Rwandans and the population flows were becoming larger due to the advance of the RPF which had by mid June gained control over three quarters of the Rwandese territory. Thus, on June 15, French Minister Alain Juppé announced a willingness of the French government to intervene in Rwanda in concert with European and African partners if the massacres did not stop.

In a letter addressed to the President of the Security Council, on June 19, the Secretary General states that "le calendrier pour le déploiement de la deuxième phase de l'opération (...) ne peut être déterminé à ce stade", thus "le Conseil de Sécurité souhaitera sans doute examiner l'offre qu'a faite le Gouvernement français d'entreprendre, sous réserve de l'autorisation du conseil (...) une opération multinationale sous commandement français"<sup>22</sup>. The following day, in a letter addressed to the Secretary General, France announced that: "France and Senegal are prepared to send a force without delay,"<sup>23</sup>,

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21 Security Council resolution 918, 16 May 1994, par. 3(b).

22 Letter S/1994/728, dated 19 June 1994.

23 Letter S/1994/734, dated 20 June 1994.

their European partners elected not to get involved. France requested a Chapter VII mandate, modelled on US intervention (UNTAF) in Somalia: "In the spirit of resolution 794 (1992), (...) our governments would like, as a legal framework for their intervention, a resolution under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations giving {our troops} a mandate to act until the expanded UNAMIR is deployed"<sup>24</sup>. They went one step further by stating a date for the retrieving of their forces: "the interim force should be able to withdraw towards the middle of August at the latest"<sup>25</sup>. At this time, however, the French did not facilitate the enlargement and deployment of UNAMIR, such as air transport or equipment for African countries that had offered troop contingents<sup>26</sup>.

### **c) Resolution 929**

The European members who chose not to get involved ended up, along side with the United States of America and the Secretary General in supporting the French in getting UN authorisation. There was a great deal of animation in and around the Security Council recalls M. Hervé Ladsous from the French mission to the UN, with various countries and organisations against what was perceived as a unilateral intervention. On June 22, Security Council Resolution 929 passed with ten in favour and five abstentions, just two votes above the necessary majority.

The resolution stated the following:

- Par. 1: the Security Council "agrees that a multinational operation may be set up for humanitarian purposes in Rwanda until UNAMIR is brought up to the necessary strength,"
- Par. 3: it authorises the Member States to act under "under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations".
- Par. 4: it "decides that the mission (...) will be limited to two months".

The intervention was therefore to be strictly humanitarian and not constitute an inter-position force and it was only given a mandate until UNAMIR was brought up to the necessary strength or at most two months.

Within days, the French started to deploy their troops with a peak force strength of 2,555 French and 350 Francophone African troops<sup>27</sup>. With headquarters in the Zairian town of Goma, they quickly took up a presence in the Western and the South-Western portions of Rwanda reaching almost Butare<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> See list in Letter S/1994/728, dated 19 June 1994.

<sup>27</sup> African components included 2 Senegalese companies, a section from both Chad and Guinea-Bissau, and assorted troops from Mauritania, Egypt, Nigeria and the Congo.

<sup>28</sup> See map.

Two weeks later the French established a very controversial "Humanitarian Safe Zone". The objectives of the French was to protect all Rwandan civilians in that zone. The Zone was under French control from July 07 to July 19<sup>29</sup>. This action raised many complaints and criticism from various Governments, organisations and personalities amongst which René Dégni-Ségui, law professor and at the time, Special Investigator for Rwanda appointed by the Human Rights Commission, describing the operation as a "political intervention that was not helping matters". Faustin Twagiramungu, Prime Minister Designate under the Arusha Acords, in an interview with Radio France Internationale on July 8, raised a very interesting question when stating: "France's intervention is acceptable so far as it remains in keeping with Resolution 929 of the {UN} Security Council. In other words it should be restricted to purely humanitarian action.

However, since yesterday, France has surprised the whole world and has been displaying its true motive: protecting the perpetrators of the massacres... So, if today France has decided to draw a demarcation line, if today France has agreed to create a security zone, it is only with the aim of protecting these people, and obviously that is unacceptable..."<sup>32</sup>. Did France violate its mandate when creating the Humanitarian Safe Zone ? The answer to that question is clearly no. Resolution 929 lays out the purposes and means of the intervention. Paragraph 3 stipulates that the operation "should achieve the humanitarian objectives set out in subparagraphs 4(a) and (b) of resolution 925 (1994)". Subparagraph 4(a) stipulates that the operation should "contribute to the security and protection of displaced persons, refugees and civilians at risk in Rwanda, including through the establishment and maintenance, where feasible, of secure humanitarian areas (...)"<sup>33</sup>. The creation by the French of a Humanitarian Safe Zone in Rwandan territory was within their mandate. The peacekeeping deployment was a success except, perhaps, that preservation of peace was made at the expense of that of justice.

## **Conclusion**

Substantial Rwandan early warning intelligence existed for years, and peaked during 1993 and early 1994. Nevertheless, many states and the UN leaders did not see the need for themselves or the UN to get involved effectively. They hoped the issue would simply resolve itself. This hope died on April 6th, and soon after the individual states and the UN should have reacted. Maybe a swift and forceful action by the international community through the UN Security Council could have reduced in numbers both the dead and refugee flows. Instead, there was a rapid withdrawal of most of UNAMIR, once foreign nationals were evacuated. UNAMIR did little for Rwandans during that period and certainly increased the hard-line Hutu elite's perception of the world's indifference to them orchestrating massacres and refugee flows.

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29 Letter from the Chargé d'Affaires A.I. of the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations Addressed to the Secretary-General, 4 August 1994 (S/1994/933).

30 African Rights, "Rwanda: death, despair and defiance", September 1994, P. 70 1.

31 Faustin Twagiramungu has been re-appointed as Prime Minister in the new government.

32 African Rights, "Rwanda: death, despair and defiance", September 1994, P. 700.

33 Resolution 925, dated 08 June 1994, (Annex 5).

The Security Council is left free to decide and to determine the existence of any "threat to the peace, breach to the peace, or act of aggression"<sup>34</sup> and how to address the problem. The French intervention was given a Chapter VII mandate while the UNAMIR forces had been operating under a much more restrictive Chapter VI.

According to Wil D. Verwey<sup>35</sup>, "there has been not one genuine example of a humanitarian intervention in history; genuine in the sense that the basic condition of relative disinterest on the side of the intervenor was fulfilled, that humanitarian considerations clearly provided the only major objectives and that no other considerations were involved". Few people want to believe that Operation *Turquoise* was a success. In fact, the role of the French in this crisis, screams out for condemnation: the French had facilitated Egyptian arms sales to Rwanda<sup>36</sup>, the French had trained and equipped the former government's army (RGF)<sup>37</sup>, the French had advised and fought along side with the RGF against the RPF in May 1990. Even during Operation *Turquoise*, France made no effort to encourage Francophone African nations to join UNAMIR II until after the operation, as they needed to control the conduct of Operation *Turquoise*. There is no doubt the French intervention under UN mandate achieved its goal in the time frame given to it, and has at no time violated its mandate.

It is commonly said in Rwanda that the Hutu militiamen and members of the presidential guard acted as Binego<sup>38</sup>, filled with a vain fury and whose anger no one could dim. It is to hope that the International Community has now the political will to prevent such violence to erupt again, for it has become all too clear that Binego will scar the country of the thousand hills again.

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34 Charter of the United Nations, Chapter VII, Article 39.

35 Wil D. Verwey, "Humanitarian intervention and international law", Netherlands International Law Review N°3, 1985, pp 378-394.

36 Human Rights Watch report: "Arming Rwanda: the arms trade and human rights abuses in the Rwandan War", P. 66, January 1994. This report was particularly enlightening about those prepared to sell arms to an unelected regime of an impoverished African country in the midst of a civil war. This includes France's role in facilitating the sale of S 6 million in arms by Egypt to Rwanda as well as its own arms transfer to Rwanda combined with the provision of military advisors and up to 680 troops who often participated in the conflict with the RPF.

37 African Rights, "Rwanda: death, despair, and defiance", September 1994, p.703

38 During the *Kubandwa* ritual, peasant Hutu give tribute to a mysterious - maybe imaginary - king: King *Ryangombo*. These rituals represent a type of symbolic protest of the Hutu peasantry against Tutsi authority. The cult is accomplished in a liturgical like manner by which initiated actors, as if possessed, incarnate the family, friends or servants of the king, all referred to as *Imandwa*. The King's son, *Binego*, is a barbarous killer. Through this ritual, the Hutu displayed openly their repressed feelings.

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